

PA Oregon Journal  
MON., MARCH 4, 1957

# 'Big Bill' Browne Dies Here

Portland Police  
Veteran Headed  
Legion Activities

Capt. William D. (Big Bill) Browne, 60, veteran Portland police official and one of the nation's leading anti-Communists, died at Providence hospital Sunday of leukemia.

Browne served in two World wars and was frequently cited for bravery. His career as a police officer won him commendation and thrust him into frequent controversies. But it was his career as an arch foe of communism that brought him his largest measure of publicity.

AS CHAIRMAN of both the Oregon and national subversive activities committees of the American Legion, Browne staunchly defended the Communist-hunting activities of Sen. Joseph McCarthy.

During World War I Browne fought in the battles of Chateau Thierry and Belleau Wood and won the Purple Heart and fourragere.

In World War II he captured six paratroopers in Belgium and won the Silver Star and Bronze Star as well as a commendation for recovering enemy documents. He rose to the rank of colonel and won the Legion of Merit for his apprehension of wanted Nazis.

Browne joined the Portland police department in 1924 and rose rapidly through the ranks after his efficient service with the old "shotgun squad." Although a victim of numerous department "shakeups," he held the important post of captain of detectives before his mysterious retirement in December of 1955 to accept a government post in Washington.

Much of the mystery about Browne's "retirement" and subsequent reinstatement with the Portland police force in April of 1956 was explained when Browne announced that he was suffering from leukemia.

Browne in recent months told his friends that his government job was a "hush-hush" post with the central intelligence agency.

DURING HIS brief period with CIA, Browne undertook a confidential overseas mission for the agency.

When results of medical examinations became known, Browne was forced to leave the federal service and returned to Portland.

Browne retired again February 14 on orders of his physician. He entered Providence hospital where Friday he had been receiving transfusions.

DURING HIS police career, Browne solved many crimes, including some celebrated cases. One of his most recent successes was in the early apprehension of a dangerous firebug who set three major blazes in downtown Portland.

Browne is survived by his wife, Barbara, who recently underwent a serious operation and still is in hospital; two stepsons, Robert and John McKown, both members of the police department; a brother, Danby Browne of Vancouver, Wash., and a granddaughter.

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